

Historic, Archive Document

**Do not assume content reflects current
scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.**

A249.3
F76J

JUNIOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



MAY 1956

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL SERVICE

Washington 25, D. C.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
LIBRARY



BOOK NUMBER A249.3
909243 F76J

INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS

909243

On June 5, 1955, Foreign Agricultural Service celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary of distinguished service to the American farm community.

During the past few decades, American agricultural activities, interests, and problems have taken on an international aspect. Developments in foreign agricultural production and trade intimately affect the individual and national welfare of farmers, agricultural trade groups, and others in this country. International trade in agricultural products has become increasingly entangled in a complex web of governmental controls and restrictions, requiring Federal assistance to farmers in paving the diplomatic path for expansion of American markets in foreign areas.

It is the mission of Foreign Agricultural Service, as the foreign arm of the Department of Agriculture, to assist farmers in development of foreign outlets for their surplus production, to analyze agricultural conditions and developments abroad that affect American markets and to disseminate trade and trend information to American farmers, and to provide representation, through Agricultural Attaches, in the major agricultural producing and consuming areas of the world.

The programs of Foreign Agricultural Service are unique in the Government, providing daily exposure to challenging problems international in scope, and requiring professionally skilled craftsmen to assure the success and continuity of its vital work.

A SMALL OFFICIAL FAMILY

At the present time, FAS has a total of 660 persons employed at our national headquarters and in foreign countries. There are 460 employees in Washington, and 200 employees in the field. In Washington, the Divisions shown on the enclosed FAS Organization Chart are staffed by an average of 25 employees. The attache offices abroad vary from one attache and secretary to an attache, secretary, and two assistant attaches at the larger posts. In each case, necessary local personnel are employed. The professional staff of the organization is made up largely of agricultural economists and agricultural marketing specialists, many of them with national and international professional reputations.

Under these administrative conditions, the agency is able to provide for individual supervision of its employees, for thoughtful orientation to job requirements, and for careful follow-up and evaluation of performance. Few agencies are in a better position to help young professionals achieve their highest potential, and to develop them for assignments of greater responsibility.

Although the size of the official family is small, opportunities for advancement in FAS are exceptionally good for the employee who works hard, is professionally competent, and can get along officially with other people. To illustrate the potential, there are 12 program Division Directors at GS-15 (\$11,610 per annum), and 23 program Branch Chiefs at GS-14 (\$10,320). In the field, the majority of 51 agricultural attache offices can be filled at GS-14, and the posts of major importance are now filled at GS-17 (\$13,975), GS-16 (\$12,900) and GS-15 (\$11,610).

JUNIOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

It is essential that FAS employ and develop young professionals who in the years ahead will be able to assume positions of leadership both in the national office and in the field. The agency has already employed 22 agricultural economists under its Junior Professional Development Program in the past two years, and will employ 15 more this year.

Each of the 22 JPD Program employees who has served one year in FAS has been promoted to the next-higher grade, and three of them have been assigned to foreign field posts as Assistant Agricultural Attaches GS-9.

To speed up its recruitment of promising young professionals, FAS will in calendar year 1956 employ 20 Student Trainees at grades GS-2 (\$2,960 p. a.), GS-3 (\$3,175 p. a.), or GS-4 (\$3,415 p. a.), depending upon whether the undergraduate appointee has completed his freshman, sophomore or junior year. Appointments will run for three months, and appointees will serve under the technical guidance of experienced senior members of the staff.

It is expected that any professional appointee hired under the JPD Program will be willing to accept rotating domestic and overseas assignments during his career in FAS. It is standard practice in the agency to rotate JPD Program appointees in Washington assignments in order technically to prepare them for eventual assignment to the field. Individual overseas tours of duty are for a period of not less than two years with probable assignment for two additional years after home leave.

MAJOR AGENCY PROGRAMS

For reasons of good management, it is essential to assign agency functions to specific organizational units. However, the geographically and functionally complex administrative environment of FAS creates maximum conditions of interdependence in achieving the goals of the agency. Teamwork is at a premium in effectively meeting the demands of the public we serve.

Briefly, the major programs of FAS, to which an appointee might be assigned, are described as follows:

Agricultural Attaches. This activity is primarily concerned with managing the representation, economic reporting, and market development activity of agricultural attaches stationed in the principal agricultural producing and consuming countries of the world. The activity also is responsible for coordinating Department participation in international organizations whose actions affect the well-being and economy of the American farm community.

Market Development. The agency plans and carries out programs designed to obtain full and continuing foreign outlets, through normal commercial channels, for the high-level production of American agriculture, with particular emphasis on quality, suitability, and market preference. Research support in the several commodity areas consists of basic studies of foreign production, marketing, consumption, stocks, prices, and policies, and of actual and potential competition that American producers may anticipate in world markets.

Special Trade Programs. The agency coordinates Department-wide planning, and carries out over-all export programs for utilization of surplus agricultural commodities, including foreign currency sales, financial assistance and relief, barter, foreign aid, and off-shore procurement. The Foreign Trade Programs Division also coordinates the development of projects for use of accrued foreign currencies to help develop foreign markets, involving activities varying in scope from international agricultural trade fairs to nutritional demonstrations in foreign areas.

Trade Policy Analysis. The Trade Policy Division provides a means for systematic broad analysis and appraisal of the effect of U. S. foreign economic and trade policy on U. S. trade in foreign products. The Division coordinates Department staff work on trade agreement negotiations conducted at the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, on financial and monetary discussions held with the International Advisory Council for International Monetary and Financial Problems, and on the economic discussions with other international bodies, such as the International Monetary Fund.

Economic Intelligence. In the Foreign Agricultural Analysis Division are geographic branches which systematically collect and analyze world-wide economic information in the field of agriculture. These branches continuously investigate and appraise the over-all agricultural production of a foreign country, its trade, stocks, prices, commercial trade policies, marketing, and economic policies. The findings of the Division are used in planning international marketing programs, special trade programs, and trade agreement programs.

Import Programs and Controls. The Import Division provides organization for collecting and analyzing data on competitive and noncompetitive agricultural commodities for the special purposes of initiating action to protect domestic agricultural production and marketing programs from excessive imports, and to keep consumers, importers and processors advised of foreign conditions and developments affecting the supplies and prices of essential products not produced in the U. S. The Division administers import controls, including licenses, on designated agricultural commodities.

SOME BENEFITS OF FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT

There are certain major benefits of Federal employment and advantages to FAS employment that you should know about in comparing offers from business and industry, and educational institutions:

1. PAY. Salaries in FAS compare favorably with those paid for similar work in private industry.

The pay grades of positions in FAS are determined by the level of duties and responsibilities of the job, and pay rates for each grade are set by Congress. It is important to note on the Salary Card, enclosed, the within-grade steps in each grade. This salary provision will permit a GS-14, for example, to advance each 18 months to the next higher step in the grade, or from \$10,320 to \$11,395 per year.

Employees are paid each two weeks, with a 12-day lag on the first payday. Employees are paid, for example, on February 23 for service performed during the period January 30 - February 10. If you entered on duty February 9, you would be paid for only two days' work on February 23, but thereafter would receive a full pay check each two weeks.

Upon separation from the Federal Service, your final salary payment will include pay for all uncompensated service performed, so you don't lose on the "lag."

2. GROUP LIFE INSURANCE. Life insurance is available at low cost to Department employees, and optional, regardless of any other Government insurance you hold. The amount of this term insurance depends on your base salary. If, for example, your base pay is \$3,670 per annum, you are insured for \$4,000, and when you are promoted to GS-7 at \$4,525, you are automatically insured for \$5,000. The cost is 25¢ per \$1,000 of insurance, deducted from your biweekly pay check. The policy includes double indemnity for accidental death.

3. RETIREMENT. The Federal retirement plan, gearing annuity benefits to years of service, basically provides for optional retirement at 60 with 30 years' service, and includes survivorship and disability provisions. Roughly, the annuity yields about 45% of the highest five-year average of earnings, with reductions for survivorship benefits. Benefits are jointly paid for by the Government and the employee, and 6% of your biweekly paycheck is deducted for such purpose. Active military service is creditable toward retirement service requirements.
4. VACATION AND SICK LEAVE. Vacation leave is earned on a graduated basis. During the first 3 years' service, you earn 13 workdays per year of vacation leave; from 3 to 15 years' service, 20 days; and after 15 years' service, 26 days. For new employees, the limit on accumulation is 30 days, paid up in cash if the employee leaves the service.

Sick leave is earned at the rate of 13 days per year, with no limit on accumulation, but no cash settlement. If after ten or fifteen years' service, you have 130 days of sick leave to your credit, and you become very ill, you would get your full base salary for about six months.

Acting military service is creditable in establishing the rate at which you earn vacation leave. For example, with four years' creditable military service, you begin earning vacation leave at the rate of 20 days a year.
5. MILITARY LEAVE. If you are a member of the National Guard or one of the Reserves of the Army or Navy, you are entitled to a maximum of 15 calendar days of military leave each year, without charge to vacation leave, with full pay, to participate in military training and field exercises.
6. OVERSEAS BENEFITS. If you are assigned overseas, you earn home leave, in addition to vacation and sick leave, at the rate of 1 week for each four months of service abroad. Furthermore, depending on the area of assignment, you may be entitled to quarters and cost-of-living allowances, and a hardship differential.
7. INJURY COMPENSATION. Compensation for loss of salary, after a 3-day waiting period, is based on two-thirds of your base salary if you have no dependents, and three-fourths of your base salary if you have a dependent. Injury on the job also entitles you to receive free medical, surgical, and hospital treatment.

8. GROUP HOSPITALIZATION. FAS participates in the Hospital Service Plan of Group Hospitalization, Incorporated, and the Surgical Service of the Medical Service of the District of Columbia. Individual contracts for both plans are available at a monthly cost of \$2.70, and Family Contracts at a monthly cost of \$6.90.
9. INCOME TAX. FAS withholds a portion of your salary each payday as current payment of income tax, credit to be taken on amounts withheld, on your income tax return.
10. GRADUATE SCHOOL. There are organized, formal educational programs in the USDA Graduate School where you can take graduate and undergraduate work, after hours. The USDA Library has the greatest collection of agricultural publications in the world.
11. INCENTIVE AWARDS. FAS participates in the USDA Incentive Awards Program, providing honorary recognition by the Secretary to employees for outstanding achievements in Department programs, and providing liberal cash awards to employees for contributions to the efficiency, economy, and effectiveness of Department operations.
12. USDA CREDIT UNION. Department employees have available the facilities of a credit union to encourage savings, and to obtain loans for many purposes at low rates of interest.

OBLIGATIONS

In the Department, as in any other large organization, certain rules and regulations have been established to guide employees in their conduct as public servants. These standards concern such matters as political activity, use of classified security information, outside employment, striking against the Government, membership in subversive organizations.

Any questions concerning the content of this document should be directed to the Personnel Division, Foreign Agricultural Service, Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosures - (1) Organization Chart, FAS
(2) Salary Card
(3) Sample Job Descriptions
(4) FOREIGN AGRICULTURE

SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION

AGRICULTURAL ECONOMIST GS-5

GRAIN AND FEED DIVISION

Introduction

This position is located in the Grain and Feed Division of the Foreign Agricultural Service. The Grain and Feed Division collects, interprets and disseminates information regarding factors affecting the marketing in foreign countries of U. S. grain and grain products. I perform the following duties in connection with the over-all objective of the Division of developing, expanding and maintaining foreign market outlets for these commodities.

Duties

I perform detailed elementary agricultural economic assignments involving the assembly, analysis, and interpretation of data on (1) production and factors affecting production, (2) trade and factors affecting trade, and (3) market conditions and factors affecting such situations.

(a) Production

I assemble, compile and make a preliminary analysis of data on acreage planted and harvested, yields and weather conditions. I conduct the preliminary analysis of data on price support programs and other incentives offered by foreign countries to their producers to encourage the production of grains.

(b) Trade

I perform research, assemble, and make the preliminary analysis of data on the intricacies of international grain transactions which are many and varied. Assignments, in this regard, require a review of stocks and exportable surpluses of grain exporting countries. I conduct studies and report on the significance of data on grain import requirements of grain deficit countries.

(c) Market Analysis

I assemble and conduct the preliminary analysis of data on production, trade, and other factors affecting demand and consumption of grains in foreign countries. Items considered in connection with these studies include grain marketing facilities and practices, prices, quality differentials, and foreign governmental policies relating to grain trade.

Scope and Effect of Work

I am required to become acquainted with the methods and problems of determining production of grain and grain products in foreign countries and with considerations necessary in determining the meaning or significance of data on exports, imports and factors affecting demand and consumption of such commodities. I make preliminary recommendations and suggestions as to the meaning or significance of the information assembled and studied. I am required to become familiar with the methods and media used by the organization to disseminate useful market information, including results of research, to the U. S. grain trade, millers, brokers, producers and others. Sources of information used in the conduct of my studies consist of agricultural attaché reports, foreign trade journals, market news and other media of information.

Supervision and Guidance Received

I work under the immediate supervision and direction of the Branch Chief or an Economist of higher grade. My supervisor furnishes me with specific instructions as to the nature and objective of each assignment. Specific problem areas are discussed with me and I am furnished with general information as to materials needed for studies and any available guidelines. I discuss complex problems arising during the course of my studies with, and receive additional guidance as necessary from, my supervisor. My work is reviewed for accuracy, presentation, completeness, and compliance with basic instructions.

Mental Demands

I am expected to use discretion and judgment in assembling and selecting materials for study, unless such data is specifically designated. Initiative is essential in arranging, summarizing and presenting the results of my findings, when the specific format and other requirements have not been determined previously.

Personal Work Contacts

Personal work contacts are, for the most part, with employees of the Division. Occasionally, contacts are made with employees of other organizations in FAS for the purpose of obtaining publications, reports and other data for use in connection with studies.

SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION

AGRICULTURAL ECONOMIST GS-5

FAR EAST ANALYSIS BRANCH

Introduction:

This position is located in the Far East Analysis Branch of the Foreign Agricultural Analysis Division. The incumbent usually performs assigned duties in an office with the company of one or more other professional employees.

Duties:

Serves as a trainee regional specialist performing professional duties relative to the preparation, assembly, analysis, and interpretation of country and regional reports on international conditions and developments in agriculture and related activities. The incumbent will make preliminary evaluation, analysis and interpretation of statistics and economic data on trends in foreign agricultural production, trade, prices, finance, marketing, consumption, development, and governmental policies as they affect U. S. agricultural interests.

The trainee will be assigned to service reports and despatches originating from a number of countries within the region. In this manner he becomes familiar with current affairs and obtains a background knowledge of the countries and region. The incumbent will write reports and service requests for information concerning the assigned countries. The trainee will become familiar with reference material and various sources of information relating to his work.

The trainee serves in a wide range of duties. Some work involves duties which are partly clerical in nature but which serve the purpose of training and acquainting the incumbent with the subject matter. These duties differ from routine functions in that a knowledge and training in agricultural economics and the methods, techniques, and procedures of economic research are necessary in this work. An elementary knowledge of statistics is also necessary in order to prepare graphs, charts, and tabulations of data. On the other hand, the duties of the trainee may concern very responsible analysis and interpretation of subject matter, which, by its very nature, may involve original research.

Scope and Effect of Work:

The incumbent's studies, reports and recommendations, when approved by a higher grade professional, may sometimes provide the basis for policy decisions. Analysis is performed not only for the Foreign Agricultural

Service but also for other organizations of the United States Government. The effect, therefore, of the trainee's work may be widespread and far-reaching. If published, the incumbent's work may serve to influence opinion and extend knowledge concerning the agriculture and related activities of foreign countries.

Supervision and Guidance Received:

The trainee will work under the general supervision of the Branch Chief and sometimes under the immediate supervision of a lower grade professional employee. The incumbent's supervisor will outline the nature and scope of the work and the objective to be achieved. He explains methods, procedures, and techniques that may be used. Procedures established in previous similar or related studies also serve as guides in the performance of research. Work is reviewed from time to time for consistency, accuracy and completeness.

Mental Demands:

The position requires an exercise of some discretion and judgment in selecting materials and data in the assembly and organization of research material, and in the presentation of results and conclusions. Initiative and originality are necessary in this work in order to reduce the need for continuous supervision.

Personal Work Contacts:

Personal relationships usually involve working with associates or assisting a higher grade agricultural economist in a research project. It may also include cooperating with or supervising the work of statistical or clerical personnel processing information or statistical data. The incumbent should possess the ability to deal effectively with others in furnishing or securing information, documents or other material necessary to the accomplishment of his assigned duties. In this connection he may deal with personnel of the Foreign Agricultural Service, or other Government agencies, with the public, or occasionally with foreign nationals.

